

2014

Ohio Incident
Print Coverage Report
July 6 (5:00AMCT)

Print Coverage Report

Highlights:

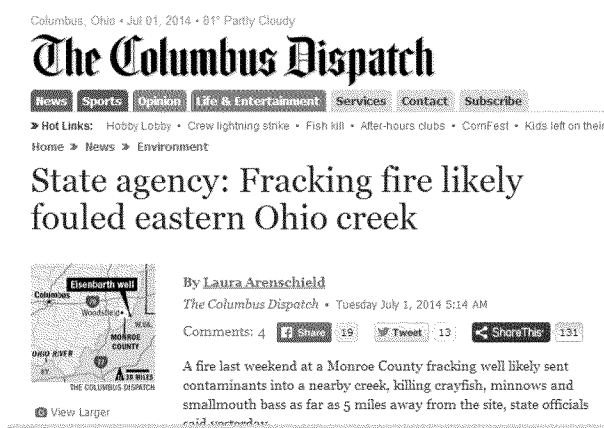


Ohio Fracking Fire Likely Cause of Large Fish Kill

EcoWatch

July 1, 2014

The high-profile environmental news website *EcoWatch* posted the below article, which mainly reiterates the *Columbus Dispatch* piece, but also includes alleged photos of the dead fish.



State agency: Fracking fire likely fouled eastern Ohio creek

The Columbus Dispatch

July 1, 2014

A fire last weekend at a Monroe County fracking well likely sent contaminants into a nearby creek, killing crayfish, minnows and smallmouth bass as far as 5 miles away from the site, state officials said yesterday. The Ohio EPA, which deals with pollutants when they reach state waters, said that the Monroe County Health Department would monitor well water. The agency and the

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency are investigating the fire and fish kill at the site, about 130 miles east of Columbus.

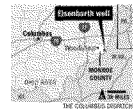
Print Coverage Report

Columbus, Ohio • Jun 30, 2014 • 78° Overcast

The Columbus Dispatch

News Sports Opinion Life & Entertainment Services Contact Subscribe
 ► Hot Links: Concert review: James Taylor • Crew lightning strike • Fish kill • After-hours clubs • ComFest • The
 Home ► News ► Environment

Fish kill in eastern Ohio might be linked to fire at fracking well



View Larger

By Jim Woods

The Columbus Dispatch • Monday June 30, 2014 9:04 AM

Comments: 1 [Share](#) 282 [Tweet](#) 50 [ShareThis](#) 502

The state is investigating a fish kill in an eastern Ohio creek near where a fire occurred at a shale-well fracking site on Saturday.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources learned yesterday of the fish kill in Possum Creek in Monroe County, said Jason Fallon, an

RELATED ITEMS

Fish kill in eastern Ohio might be linked to fire at fracking well

The Columbus Dispatch

June 30, 2014

The state is investigating a fish kill in an eastern Ohio creek near where a fire occurred at a shale-well fracking site on Saturday. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources learned yesterday of the fish kill in Possum Creek in Monroe County, said Jason Fallon, an agency spokesman. Jack Shaner, deputy director of the Ohio Environmental Council, "It sounds like it was not just smoke and not just fire, but a major fish kill," he said. "Both the company and state agencies owe the public a full public accounting of what went wrong and how they are going to prevent future occurrences."

Columbus, Ohio • Jun 29, 2014 • 77° Partly Cloudy

The Columbus Dispatch

News Sports Opinion Life & Entertainment Services Contact Subscribe
 ► Hot Links: Crew lightning strike • ComFest • WWI, 100 years later • At Home • The Mailbox • New! Photo
 Home ► News ► Environment

ENERGY

Glitch sparks smoky fire at gas well



View Larger

By Jennifer Smith Richards

The Columbus Dispatch • Sunday June 29, 2014 5:52 AM

Comments: 0 [Share](#) 1 [Tweet](#) 0 [ShareThis](#) 31

A Monroe County shale-well site still was smoldering last night, and some residents were sheltered at a nearby high school, after an explosive fire yesterday morning.

Officials said yesterday that the fire at the Eisenbarth well pad was

Glitch sparks smoky fire at gas well

The Columbus Dispatch

June 29, 2014

Officials said yesterday that the fire at the Eisenbarth well pad was caused by a mechanical malfunction in hydraulic tubing and that it was limited to the equipment on the surface of the well pad, which is the area that surrounds the natural-gas wells.

AP Associated Press

Gas well fire in eastern Ohio forces evacuations

Associated Press Newswires
 28 June 2014 16:46, 106 words, English,
 (c) 2014 The Associated Press. All Rights Reserved



HANINBAL, Ohio (AP) — A fire at natural gas well site in southeastern Ohio near the West Virginia state line is forcing a few evacuations.

The operator of the site says the fire in Monroe County is on the surface and not burning in any of its wells.

Statoil USA Onshore Properties says those living near the site have been evacuated and that no one has been injured.

The State Highway Patrol says about five people volunteered to leave their homes.

The Columbus Dispatch reports that the site has eight wells with just one that is producing.

Press Association, Inc.

Document APRS000020140628ea6s003bq

Gas well fire in eastern Ohio forces evacuations

Associated Press

June 28, 2014

A fire at natural gas well site in southeastern Ohio near the West Virginia state line is forcing a few evacuations. Statoil USA Onshore Properties says those living near the site have been evacuated and that no one has been injured.

Print Coverage Report

REUTERS

Norway's Statoil says battling fire at Ohio shale well pad

OSLO, June 28 Sat Jun 28, 2014 4:30pm EDT

0 COMMENTS | [Tweet](#) 0 | [Share](#) | [Share this](#) | [Email](#) | [Print](#)

RELATED TOPICS

[Stocks](#) »

[Markets](#) »

(Reuters) - Norwegian energy firm Statoil is battling a fire at the Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio, part of its shale gas operations in the Marcellus area, it said in a statement on Saturday.

"There is a fire involving equipment on location," the firm said. "It is limited to surface equipment and does not involve the wells."

The firm said all personnel were accounted for and there were no injuries reported.

(Reporting by Balazs Koranyi)

FILED UNDER: [STOCKS](#) [MARKETS](#)

[Recommend](#) Be the first of your friends to recommend this.

[Tweet this](#) | [Link this](#) | [Share this](#) | [Digg this](#) | [Email](#) | [Print](#) | [Reprints](#)

Norway's Statoil says battling fire at Ohio shale well pad

Reuters

June 28, 2014

Norwegian energy firm Statoil is battling a fire at the Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio, part of its shale gas operations in the Marcellus area, it said in a statement on Saturday.

Print Coverage Report

July 3, 2014

These Fish Weren't Playing Opossum (Creek) – **FracTracker**: Hydraulic tubing had caught fire at Statoil's Eisenbarth well pad, resulting in the evacuation of 20-25 nearby residents.1 Statoil North America is a relatively large Norwegian-based company, employing roughly 23,000 workers, that operates all of its OH shale wells in Monroe County.2 The Eisenbarth pad has 8 wells, 2 of which are active.1 However, the fire did not result from operations underground. All burning occurred at the surface from faulty hydraulic lines. Investigation, Cleanup Ongoing at Site of Statoil Fire in Ohio – **NGI's Shale Daily**: An investigation into the cause of a large fire last weekend at a Statoil ASA drilling site in Monroe County, OH, near the West Virginia state line continued on Thursday. Cleanup efforts were expected to last several days, said an Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) spokesman, Thursday.

Explosion Investigations Continue – **Marietta Times**, picked up by *Columbus CEO*: State and federal investigations continued Wednesday into last week's explosion at the Belpre area Enviro-Tank Clean, Inc., plant as well as a massive fire that occurred at a Statoil Eisenbarth natural gas well site near Hannibal Saturday. Deborah Zubaty, area director for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Columbus, said the agency is looking into both incidents. Zubaty said there is currently no timeframe for completion of the investigation, which can take up to six months, although she does not expect the Enviro-Tank investigation to be nearly that long. She said as of Wednesday the fire marshal's office had not been contacted about an investigation of Saturday's fire at the Statoil site near Hamibal. But Zubaty said OSHA would be involved at the natural gas well site. "We'll investigate the Monroe County incident. We had people out there yesterday, but the site had not yet been cleared for investigation," she said. "Right now we're trying to find out what happened. I understand there may have been some environmental damage."

July 2, 2014

ODNR Says Shale Drilling Industry Coming Of Age – **Ohio Public Radio**: Ohio's drilling industry is starting to hit its stride when it comes to producing natural gas from the Utica shale, according to the latest report from the state department that regulates the industry. In its annual State of the Play report, ODNR says production nearly doubled between 2012 and 2013. Leaders say a big reason for this is the maturing industry... Nathan Johnson, an attorney with the Ohio Environmental Council, adds that a recent fracking well fire that killed a number of wildlife in Monroe County is an example of why the state should revise its setback regulations from streams.

Shale drilling drives increased natural gas, oil production – **Times Reporter**: Ohio's natural gas production almost doubled last year, a historic increase driven by horizontal shale drilling... A fire Saturday at a shale well in Monroe County was a reminder of what can go wrong. The blaze forced nearby residents to leave their homes temporarily, destroyed about 25 pieces of equipment and is being investigated by ODNR and Ohio EPA. The multi-well pad is owned by Statoil, but Halliburton was doing a fracking job at the site when the fire started.

Fire Blazed At Well Pad Saturday – **Wetzel Chronicle**: A fire raged at Statoil's Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County Saturday, sending a giant plume of black smoke into the air that could be seen for tens of miles... In an interview by phone with the Wetzel Chronicle, Bjorn Otto Sverdrup of Statoil stated that the company's focus is "on the safety of the personnel and to make steps together with local authorities to minimize the impact on the families in the community." Sverdrup noted that Statoil has not spent much time assessing the damages on the site, but noted there were trucks, pumps, and machinery on the site and that "a large part of that was demolished."

State says Utica shale fracking has helped nearly double natural gas production in Ohio – **The Columbus Dispatch**, picked up by *Columbus CEO*, *Dayton Daily News*: Fracking wells in the Utica shale in eastern Ohio helped to nearly double the state's natural gas production from 2012 to 2013, state officials

Print Coverage Report

reported today... And last weekend, a fire at a Monroe County well likely sent contaminants into a nearby creek, killing crayfish, minnows and smallmouth bass as far as 5 miles away from the site.

Are fracking chemicals from Monroe County fire and spill headed toward the Ohio River? – **Ohio Citizen**

Action: Saturday's fire at a Monroe County frack well site underscores the need for better oil and gas emergency planning and fracking chemical disclosure. Volunteer firefighters from 6 counties in Ohio and West Virginia doused the fire, which spread to 20 trucks, including 4 containing fracking chemicals, in a battle that lasted for several hours. The result is thousands of gallons of chemical-laced water migrating to nearby Possum Creek, a tributary to the Ohio River.

Thousands of fish dead in Ohio creek after fire – **Associated Press**; picked up by: *Akron Beacon Journal*, *WBNS*, *SF Gate*, *TribTown.com*, *The Times*: An environmental advocacy organization is looking into a fish kill in an eastern Ohio creek that is also under investigation by the state. WTOV-TV in Steubenville (<http://bit.ly/1pUVvH>) reports thousands of fish turned up dead across several miles of Opossum Creek in Monroe County after a weekend fire at a gas well site. State authorities haven't said whether those situations are connected.

July 1, 2014

Ohio Fracking Fire Likely Cause of Large Fish Kill – **EcoWatch**: Ohio Department of Natural Resources and state Environmental Protection Agency officials have launched an investigation to find out what killed a large, but unspecified, amount of fish in a creek that feeds into the Ohio River. While Ohio officials are willing to concede that a fire at a nearby shale gas fracking site “likely” contaminated Monroe County's Opossum Creek, according to the Columbus Dispatch, one environmental group appears more certain that those dots have a connection. An ODNR official confirmed the fish kill Sunday—just a day after the fire temporarily displaced about 25 area families. ODNR spokeswoman Bethany McCorkle told the paper she did not know whether the fracking contaminants had reached the Ohio River, and the EPA said it doesn't know yet if drinking water in the area has been impacted.

Fire At Ohio Fracking Well Forced Evacuations And Likely Contributed To Fish Kill – **ThinkProgress** picked up by: *Climate Progress*: Though officials didn't provide the Columbus Dispatch with a list of chemicals that were present at the site of the fire, many common fracking chemicals have been found to be toxic. Last year, a study that looked at groundwater samples from fracking sites found elevated levels of endocrine-disrupting chemicals, which have been linked to infertility, birth defects, and cancer. Another found that fracking operations in the U.S. produced 280 billion gallons of toxic wastewater in 2012, fluid that often contains carcinogens and can be radioactive. In 2009, another fish kill occurred when up to 8,000 gallons of fracking fluids spilled in Dimock, Pennsylvania, killing some fish and causing others to swim “erratically.” And fracking chemicals have caused fish kills before. Last year, a federal report found that a fracking fluid spill in 2007 caused the “widespread death or distress of aquatic species” in a small Appalachian creek in Kentucky. The study found that the fish in the creek, including the federally threatened Blackside dace, suffered from gill lesions and damaged livers and spleens, symptoms that are consistent with exposure to heavy metals and acidic water.

State agency: Fracking fire likely fouled eastern Ohio creek – **The Columbus Dispatch**: A fire last weekend at a Monroe County fracking well likely sent contaminants into a nearby creek, killing crayfish, minnows and smallmouth bass as far as 5 miles away from the site, state officials said yesterday. The agency and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency are investigating the fire and fish kill at the site, about 130 miles east of Columbus. Bethany McCorkle, spokeswoman for the Department of Natural Resources, said she did not know whether contaminants had reached the Ohio. The EPA said it doesn't know yet whether area drinking water has been tainted.

Print Coverage Report

June 30, 2014

Ohio environmentalists waiting to see if a Monroe County wild fire set in motion a huge fish kill –

Outdoors with Frischkorn (blog): With the debate regarding hydraulic fracturing (Fracking) far from over in Ohio, opponents of the practice may have been handed a pretty big “I told you so.” Or maybe not, as state wildlife officials join with their environmental brethren continue to collect evidence and other information related to the fire/fish and wildlife kill that happened over the last weekend in June. “This may be unprecedented; perhaps even being the biggest Ohio fish kill related to the oil and gas industry,” Johnson said. Yet Johnson does say that drawing a line from Point A (the wildfire) to Point B (the fish kill) and then to Point C (a well hole employing fracking fluid) is a bit “speculative.”

Twenty Trucks Burn & Major Fish Kill at Well Pad in the Ohio Valley – **FrackCheck WV:** From an Article by Jim Woods, Columbus Dispatch, June 30, 2014. The State of Ohio is investigating a fish kill in an eastern Ohio creek near where a fire occurred at a shale-well fracking site on Saturday. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources learned yesterday of the fish kill in Possum Creek in Monroe County, said Jason Fallon, an agency spokesman. Fallon said he did not have details about the extent of the kill. “I can’t confirm if it’s related to the gas-well fire,” he said.

Weekend Fire At Statoil Well Pad in Ohio Township Prompts Evacuation – **Natural Gas Intelligence:** Personnel and residents were evacuated over the weekend after a well pad operated by Statoil ASA in Monroe County, OH, caught fire, damaging surface equipment at the site and prompting state and local officials to respond, according to the company. No one was hurt. The incident marks the third major well site emergency in the Appalachian Basin in the last five months. In February, two wells operated by Chevron Appalachia LLC caught fire after an explosion that killed one worker in Pennsylvania (see Shale Daily, Feb. 11).

Statoil reports fire at Ohio well pad now extinguished – **Oil & Gas Journal:** A fire reported by Statoil ASA on June 28 at the company’s Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio, has been extinguished. The fire involved surface equipment only and the wells themselves were never on fire, the company said. All personnel were evacuated and remain safe. No major injuries have been reported. As a precautionary measure, the surrounding residences were temporarily evacuated.

Fire currently being managed at Statoil onshore well pad - Monroe County, Ohio – **Scandinavian Oil & Gas:** A fire is being managed at Statoil’s Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio. The incident was reported at 9 am (EST) to the company’s alarm center. Emergency responders were immediately notified about the situation. Statoil’s incident command team has been mobilised and is responding.

Fish kill reported near Ohio gas well fire site – **Associated Press,** picked up by *WTRF, TribTown.com, The Times Leader, WTOV Steubenville, The Daily Reporter:* A fish kill has been reported in a Monroe County creek near the site of a weekend fire at an eastern Ohio gas well. The state is investigating the fish kill. Ohio Environmental Council deputy director Jack Shaner tells The Columbus Dispatch (<http://bit.ly/1nWs7ZO>) he was told the kill spanned a few miles. An Ohio Department of Natural Resources spokesman told the newspaper Sunday that he didn’t have details about the fish kill or whether it was related to the fire.

Fish kill in eastern Ohio might be linked to fire at fracking well – **The Columbus Dispatch:** picked up by *Environmental Economics, E&E News Greenwire:* The state is investigating a fish kill in an eastern Ohio creek near where a fire occurred at a shale-well fracking site on Saturday. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources learned yesterday of the fish kill in Possum Creek in Monroe County, said Jason Fallon, an agency spokesman. Jack Shaner, deputy director of the Ohio Environmental Council, “It sounds like it was not just smoke and not just fire, but a major fish kill,” he said. “Both the company and state agencies owe the public a full public accounting of what went wrong and how they are going to prevent future occurrences.”

Print Coverage Report

Statoil reports blaze at Ohio shale well, No injuries reported in equipment fire at Ohio well. – **UPI:** No injuries were reported when above-ground equipment at a shale reserve area caught fire in Monroe County, Ohio, Norwegian energy company Statoil said.

UPDATE: Monroe Co. Residents Share Evacuation Accounts – **WTAP NBC The News Center:**

"First I thought it was a storm, then I came out and saw the black smoke, and it sounded like a fourth of July event a little early," said David Dye. Dye and his family have lived in the area for decades. He says things have changed since the oil company moved in. "If I'd have known what I know now, I wish they would've never came around. They more or less seem to think they can run all over anybody and nobody has to say a word, but if that would've ignited those wells on the hill, they say it would've taken out New Martinsville.

June 29, 2014

UPDATE 1-Ohio well pad fire to have minimal impact on output-Statoil – **Reuters:** Norwegian energy firm Statoil has put out most of the fire at the well pad in Monroe County, Ohio, and impact on its shale gas production from the Marcellus area will be minimal, its spokesman said on Sunday.

Glitch sparks smoky fire at gas well – **The Columbus Dispatch:** A Monroe County shale-well site still was smoldering last night, and some residents were sheltered at a nearby high school, after an explosive fire yesterday morning. Officials said yesterday that the fire at the Eisenbarth well pad was caused by a mechanical malfunction in hydraulic tubing and that it was limited to the equipment on the surface of the well pad, which is the area that surrounds the natural-gas wells. "All of the people are accounted for, and we're not aware of any injuries reported. There probably are people being subject to examination, but it seems to be OK," said Bjorn Otto Sverdrup, spokesman for Statoil North America, which operates the wells.

Emergency At Statoil's Eisenbarth Well Pad – **MarineLink.com:** A fire is being managed at Statoil's Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio. The incident was reported at 9 am (EST) to the company's alarm center. Emergency responders were immediately notified about the situation.

June 28, 2014

Massive fire at a well-site in Monroe Co. OH – **Bill Huston's Blog:** Massive fire at a well-site in Monroe Co. OH: "The main concern is about the firing spreading, but also explosions as the gas well heads get hot and when they heat up they tend to explode, and that could cause debris to fly through the air for up to a mile radius."

Gas well fire in eastern Ohio forces evacuations – **Associated Press,** picked up by *WTRF, WTGV, NBC4i, WBNS, ABC6, WTOV, Toledo News, The Marietta Times, The Republic, Fox19, Fox28, The Intelligencer, Daily Reporter, Wetzel Chronicle, Times Leader, Dayton Daily News* and *WFMJ*: A fire at natural gas well site in southeastern Ohio near the West Virginia state line is forcing a few evacuations. Statoil USA Onshore Properties says those living near the site have been evacuated and that no one has been injured.

Norway's Statoil says battling fire at Ohio shale well pad – **Reuters:** Norwegian energy firm Statoil is battling a fire at the Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio, part of its shale gas operations in the Marcellus area, it said in a statement on Saturday.

Fire at natural-gas well site in Monroe County forces evacuations – **The Columbus Dispatch,** picked up by *Columbus CEO*: A natural gas well site operated by Statoil in Monroe County has been on fire since at least 9 a.m. today, and at least some nearby residents have been evacuated.

Authorities Confirm Well Site Fire in Monroe County – **WTRF:** The Monroe County Sheriff's Department has confirmed that a well site is currently on fire. Police are not releasing any other details at this time.

Print Coverage Report

These Fish Weren't Playing Opossum (Creek)

A First-hand Look at the Recent Statoil Well Pad Fire

July 3, 2014

FracTracker

Evan Collins and Rachel Wadell, Summer Research Interns, Wheeling Jesuit University

After sitting in the non-air-conditioned lab on a muggy Monday afternoon (June 30, 2014), we were more than ready to go for a ride to Opossum Creek after our professor at Wheeling Jesuit University mentioned a field work opportunity. As a researcher concerned about drilling's impacts, our professor has given many talks on the damaging effects that unconventional drilling can have on the local ecosystem. During the trip down route 7, he explained that there had been a serious incident on a well pad in Monroe County, Ohio (along the OH-WV border) on Saturday morning.

About the Incident

Hydraulic tubing had caught fire at Statoil's Eisenbarth well pad, resulting in the evacuation of 20-25 nearby residents.¹ Statoil North America is a relatively large Norwegian-based company, employing roughly 23,000 workers, that operates all of its OH shale wells in Monroe County.² The Eisenbarth pad has 8 wells, 2 of which are active.¹ However, the fire did not result from operations underground. All burning occurred at the surface from faulty hydraulic lines.

Resulting Fish Kill?

When we arrived at Opossum Creek, which flows into the Ohio River north of New Martinsville, WV, it smelled like the fresh scent of lemon pine-sol. A quick look revealed that there was definitely something wrong with the water. The water had an orange tint, aquatic plants were wilting, and dozens of fish were belly-up. In several shallow pools along the creek, a few small mouth bass were still alive, but they appeared to be disoriented. As we drove down the rocky path towards the upstream contamination site, we passed other water samplers. One group was from the Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health (CTEH). The consulting firm was sampling for volatile organic compounds, while we were looking for the presence of halogens such as Bromide and Chloride. These are the precursors to trihalomethanes, a known environmental toxicant.

Visiting the Site

After collecting water samples, we decided to visit the site of the fire. As we drove up the ridge, we passed another active well site. Pausing for a break and a peek at the well, we gazed upon the scenic Appalachian hillsides and enjoyed the peaceful drone of the well site. Further up the road, we came to the skeletal frame of the previous Statoil site. Workers and members of consulting agencies, such as CTEH, surrounded the still smoking debris. After taking a few pictures, we ran into a woman who lived just a half-mile from the well site. We asked her about the fire and she stated that she did not appreciate having to evacuate her home. Surrounding plants and animals were not able to be evacuated, however.

Somehow the fish living in Opossum Creek, just downhill from the well, ended up dead after the fire. The topography of the area suggests that runoff from the well would likely flow in a different direction, so the direct cause of the fish kill is still obscure. While it is possible that chemicals used on the well pad ran into the creek while the fire was being extinguished, the OH Department of Natural Resources "can't confirm if it (the fish kill) is related to the gas-well fire."³ In reference to the fire, a local resident said "It's one of those things that happens. My God, they're 20,000 feet down in the ground. Fracking isn't going to hurt anything around here. The real danger is this kind of thing — fire or accidents like that."⁴

Lacking Transparency

Print Coverage Report

Unfortunately, this sentiment is just another example of the general public being ill-informed about all of the aspects involved in unconventional drilling. This knowledge gap is largely due to the fact that oil and gas extraction companies are not always transparent about their operations or the risks of drilling. In addition to the potential for water pollution, earthquakes, and illness due to chemicals, air pollution from active unconventional well sites is increasing annually.

CO2 Emissions

Using prior years' data, from 2010 to 2013, we determined that the average CO2 output from unconventional gas wells in 2013 was equal to that of an average coal-fired plant. If growth continued at this rate, the total emissions of all unconventional wells in West Virginia will approximate 10 coal-fired power plants in the year 2030. Coincidentally, this is the same year which the EPA has mandated a 30 percent reduction in CO2 emissions by all current forms of energy production. However, recent reports suggest that the amount of exported gas will quadruple by 2030, meaning that the growth will actually be larger than originally predicted.⁵ Yet, this number only includes the CO2 produced during extraction. It does not include the CO2 released when the natural gas is burned, or the gas that escapes from leaks in the wells.

Long-Term Impacts

Fires and explosions are just some of the dangers involved in unconventional drilling. While they can be immediately damaging, it is important to look at the long-term impacts that this industry has on the environment. Over time, seepage into drinking water wells and aquifers from underground injection sites will contaminate these potable sources of water. Constant drilling has also led to the occurrence of unnatural earthquakes. CO2 emissions, if left unchecked, could easily eclipse the output from coal-fired power plants – meaning that modern natural gas drilling isn't necessarily the "clean alternative" as it has been advertised.

<http://www.fractracker.org/2014/07/opossum-creek-fish-kill/>

Print Coverage Report

Investigation, Cleanup Ongoing at Site of Statoil Fire in Ohio

July 3, 2014

NGI's Shale Daily

Jamison Cocklin

An investigation into the cause of a large fire last weekend at a Statoil ASA drilling site in Monroe County, OH, near the West Virginia state line continued on Thursday. Cleanup efforts were expected to last several days, said an Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) spokesman, Thursday.

"We've got folks down there right now and we're still trying to figure out the cause," said spokesman Mark Bruce. "I know they don't have an answer yet; it's still very early on."

An early morning fire was reported by Statoil last Saturday (see Shale Daily, June 30), prompting regulators and emergency management personnel to respond and issue a voluntary evacuation order that has since been lifted for those living nearby. ODNR said 20 pump and blender trucks, along with other surface equipment, were destroyed in the fire at the eight-well Eisenbarth pad in Ohio Township.

Statoil spokesman Bjorn Otto Sverdrup said crews, trucks and other equipment were at the site preparing for the hydraulic fracturing (fracking) of seven wells. The wells were shut-in before they could be damaged by the fire.

The accident is thought to be the cause of a large fish kill in a nearby creek where crayfish, minnows and smallmouth bass were found dead miles away.

"There isn't an answer yet," Bruce said of the fish kill. "They've conducted tests of the water and the results have yet to come back. There's also speculation on how widespread the fish kill was. There's no definite connections -- I'm not saying this wasn't caused by the accident -- but we just don't have anything that concretely shows what killed the fish."

Bruce said Statoil has fully cooperated with regulators. A unified command center has also been established at the site for ODNR and Ohio Environmental Protection Agency personnel. Statoil officials are also on site "to get to the bottom of what happened," Bruce said.

<http://www.naturalgasintel.com/articles/98917-investigation-cleanup-ongoing-at-site-of-statoil-fire-in-ohio>

Print Coverage Report

Explosion Investigations Continue

July 3, 2014

Marietta Times

Sam Shawver

State and federal investigations continued Wednesday into last week's explosion at the Belpre area Enviro-Tank Clean, Inc., plant as well as a massive fire that occurred at a Statoil Eisenbarth natural gas well site near Hannibal Saturday.

Deborah Zubaty, area director for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Columbus, said the agency is looking into both incidents.

"We have people at both locations," she said. "At Enviro-Tank we're continuing our investigation which is only in the beginning stages. We're interviewing management and employees at this time."

Zubaty said there is currently no timeframe for completion of the investigation, which can take up to six months, although she does not expect the Enviro-Tank investigation to be nearly that long.

Three people were injured in the Enviro-Tank explosion.

Kevin S. McClain, age 32, Ravenswood, W.Va., suffered severe burns and was airlifted from the Camden Clark campus to Cabell Huntington Burn Center following the explosion. He remained in the hospital burn unit Wednesday where hospital officials listed McClain in stable but critical condition.

He is an employee of BBU Services of West Virginia, a Kenna-based environmental construction contractor.

Justin A. Flesher, 33, and Fred E. Johnston, 53, both Enviro-Tank employees from Belpre, were treated for less critical burns and released from area hospitals the day of the explosion.

The explosion occurred around 8:50 a.m. on June 24 as a mixture of fuel and water was being transferred from a truck to a storage tank at the Enviro-Tank facility. The Ohio State Fire Marshal's Office has said the explosion was caused by the ignition of excessive gasoline vapor in the storage tank area.

"We closed our investigation there last week, and it was ruled an accidental incident," said Lindsey Burnworth, information officer for the fire marshal's office.

She said as of Wednesday the fire marshal's office had not been contacted about an investigation of Saturday's fire at the Statoil site near Hannibal.

"We have no one there now, and do not know if our office will be needed there or not," Burnworth said.

But Zubaty said OSHA would be involved at the natural gas well site.

"We'll investigate the Monroe County incident. We had people out there yesterday, but the site had not yet been cleared for investigation," she said. "Right now we're trying to find out what happened. I understand there may have been some environmental damage."

A spokesperson for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, which regulates shale oil and gas drilling in the state, said the Statoil fire was apparently caused by a surface hose that malfunctioned during a hydraulic fracturing job. The malfunction caused a truck to catch fire and the blaze eventually spread to 20 trucks at the site.

Print Coverage Report

ODNR spokeswoman Bethany McCorkle told the Martins Ferry Times Leader that state regulators are investigating whether the Statoil fire contributed to a fish kill in Opossum Creek which is located near the well site. Hundreds of dead fish have reportedly been found in the creek.

No one was injured during Saturday's fire, but residents of more than 20 homes in the area were encouraged to evacuate as a precaution.

Monroe County Sheriff Charles Black was out of state at the time of the fire, but received a full briefing on the incident when he returned.

"That could have turned tragic pretty quickly. We advised area residents to evacuate, but from what I understand the first responders were most at risk," he said Wednesday, noting chemicals reportedly stored at the site could have caused major injury to those closest to the fire.

"We're lucky no one got killed," Black said. "I think a lot of people panicked, and there should have been a better contingency plan in place."

The sheriff said for the last three months he's encouraged monthly meetings with oil and gas industry representatives, the county commissioners, and county emergency management personnel to work out a contingency plan. He hopes Saturday's incident would help the community see the importance of developing a plan for such emergencies.

Black noted the fire was above ground and did not occur in the gas well itself.

"If it had been a well fire, it would have required a very specialized crew to come in and put it out," he said, adding that there are only a few such groups throughout the U.S.

State Senator Lou Gentile sent a letter to ODNR Tuesday, asking that the agency keep his office informed as the investigation of the Statoil fire progresses.

"We don't have all the details at this point, it's still under investigation. But my purpose for the letter is to make sure investigators keep in contact with my office so we can keep our constituents informed," he said. "We're not pointing fingers at anyone in this situation, but we want to make sure ODNR and other agencies involved are doing whatever they can to prevent something like this from happening again in the future."

<http://www.mariettatimes.com/page/content.detail/id/562017/Explosion-investigations-continue.html>
<http://www.columbusceo.com/content/stories/apexchange/2014/07/03/explosion-investigations-continue.html>

Print Coverage Report

ODNR Says Shale Drilling Industry Coming Of Age

July 2, 2014

Ohio Public Radio

Andy Chow

While it's slowed down a bit, the shale natural gas boom is still pushing an industry that's growing in Ohio -- not only attracting oil and gas companies but other businesses that benefit from shale production. And as Statehouse correspondent Andy Chow reports, Ohio's top leaders say the infrastructure around the shale play continues to improve.

Ohio's drilling industry is starting to hit its stride when it comes to producing natural gas from the Utica shale, according to the latest report from the state department that regulates the industry. In its annual State of the Play report, ODNR says production nearly doubled between 2012 and 2013. Leaders say a big reason for this is the maturing industry.

It's been about four years since companies started to horizontally drill on the Utica shale. This process includes hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking. ODNR's Oil and Gas Chief Rick Simmers says the ramp up in production is partly due to the companies learning more about the nature of the shale over time.

For example, the average time it takes to drill a well has been cut in half because companies are more familiar with the territory.

Simmers: "They're also learning how to refine or fine-tune the completion. In other words how do they draw the oil and gas out of the well effectively and economically so as those technologies improve and those modifications to the process improve the production of oil and gas out of the wells will increase."

ODNR Director Jim Zehringer says the spike in production means natural gas is an even more reliable energy resource now.

Zehringer: "Because of the Utica shale Ohio now produces more than half the natural gas we need to keep our homes warm during that cold winter that Rick just mentioned. Not only are we becoming more energy independent as a nation we are becoming more energy dependent as a state."

Leaders used the event as an opportunity to tout Ohio as a business-friendly environment for other gas-related companies that may consider moving to the state. But Zehringer said the state will enforce regulations when needed.

Zehringer: "If an operation must be stopped or a company suspended in order to protect Ohioans and our environment we have and we will take the right steps necessary to do so."

A recent example of this is when—after a series of small earthquakes in Mahoning County—ODNR suspended drilling in a certain area and implemented new rules to monitor possible seismic activity.

Nathan Johnson, an attorney with the Ohio Environmental Council, believes the state could be doing more to toughen-up regulation.

Johnson: "Across the board there are so many areas that could be approved. The stringency of Class II injection wells—certainly the solid waste that is now being beneficially used but no testing or tracking in most cases."

Johnson adds that a recent fracking well fire that killed a number of wildlife in Monroe County is an example of why the state should revise its setback regulations from streams.

Print Coverage Report

The creation of new rules and regulations is actually good for attracting business, according to the former director of the state's regulation over the industry. David Mustine is now with Gov. John Kasich's jobs creating entity JobsOhio, working with companies that may want to move to Ohio and set up businesses that make use of the produced natural gas.

Mustine: "Downstream companies before they make major investment in our state—they want to make sure we have a healthy business climate—and to have a healthy business climate we have to have responsible regulation and the companies expect that."

Looking to the future of shale gas development in Ohio—Zehringer says ODNR will continue to revise laws in order to strengthen its protection of ground water.

Zehringer: "All our agencies will work every day together to make sure oil and gas development does not harm our citizens or our environment."

ODNR officials added that the department continues to work on its website to improve the way the public can research drilling information and make it user-friendly.

<http://wcbe.org/post/odnr-says-shale-drilling-industry-coming-age>

Print Coverage Report

Shale drilling drives increased natural gas, oil production

July 2, 2014

Times Reporter

Shane Hoover

Ohio's natural gas production almost doubled last year, a historic increase driven by horizontal shale drilling.

The state's 352 horizontal wells, the vast majority in the Utica Shale, produced more natural gas in 2013 than Ohio's approximately 51,000 conventional wells, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources said Wednesday in the agency's annual State of the Play drilling report.

"Today, we have data showing history is being made as we speak," ODNR Director James Zehringer said, speaking at Stark State College, which has become a local training center for the drilling industry. Horizontal shale wells produced 3.7 million barrels of oil and 100 billion cubic feet of natural gas in 2013. That was almost six times the amount of oil and almost eight times the amount of natural gas produced by 85 horizontal wells in 2012.

For all wells in the state, oil production grew 62 percent to 8.1 million barrels of oil and natural gas production rose 97 percent to nearly 172 billion cubic feet. Even with those increases, oil and natural gas production remained below historic peaks.

Drillers in Ohio are using horizontal drilling and fracking in the Utica and Marcellus shales, primarily in eastern and southern parts of the state. The Utica has been more intensely developed, with 470 producing wells as of last week, compared to 11 producing Marcellus wells, according to ODNR.

The Utica primarily contains natural gas, but is unique in that it contains wet gas products like ethane, propane, butane and pentane, said Richard J. Simmers, chief of ODNR's Division of Oil and Gas Resources. Those natural gas liquids are worth more money, but also require specialized processing.

Limited pipeline and processing capacity caused production to flatten around the end of last year, but it picked up in the first quarter of 2014, with almost 2 million barrels of oil and 67.3 billion cubic feet of natural gas, Simmers said. Drillers are also fine-tuning their drilling and fracking techniques, leading to better well results.

Ohio homes used an average of 280 billion cubic feet of natural gas a year, by the end of 2015, the state will probably produce enough gas to meet that need, Simmers said.

Tom Stewart, executive vice president of the Ohio Oil and Gas Association, said the report was consistent with his group's analysis and confirmed the Utica Shale is primarily a gas play.

"Everything people have been talking about over the past year and a half is now unfolding before our eyes," Stewart said.

BIGGER PICTURE

Zehringer and Simmers were joined by officials with Jobs Ohio, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the state fire marshal, who discussed the billions of dollars invested in pipelines and processing, increased well inspections, new regulations and a new website that will make ODNR reports more accessible.

Zehringer said shale drilling will not be done in a way that puts the public at risk.

Print Coverage Report

A fire Saturday at a shale well in Monroe County was a reminder of what can go wrong. The blaze forced nearby residents to leave their homes temporarily, destroyed about 25 pieces of equipment and is being investigated by ODNR and Ohio EPA.

The multi-well pad is owned by Statoil, but Halliburton was doing a fracking job at the site when the fire started.

Simmers said a hydraulic line on a piece of equipment appeared to have ruptured, spraying hydraulic oil onto a diesel engine, the possible ignition source.

The fire then spread to fuel tanks and other machines, but not the fracturing fluid or the wells themselves, he said.

Ohio EPA Director Craig Butler said the integrity of the wells was maintained, and U.S. EPA did air monitoring and reported no long-term exposure issues.

Ohio EPA is working with ODNR to determine what killed fish in a stream near the well pad, and cleanup will continue for a while, he said. "We'll take a strong regulatory response if one is needed, but we can't predict what that will be."

Reach Shane at 330-580-8338

On Twitter: @shooverREP

<http://www.timesreporter.com/article/20140702/BUSINESS/140709794/10680/SPECIAL>

Print Coverage Report

Fire Blazed At Well Pad Saturday

July 2, 2014

Wetzel Chronicle

Lauren Matthews

A fire raged at **Statoil's** Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County Saturday, sending a giant plume of black smoke into the air that could be seen for tens of miles.

According to a release issued by the company it was extinguished by late Sunday afternoon. **Statoil** stated Sunday that the fire involved surface equipment at the location; none of the wells were on fire. **Statoil** also reported that a well inspection team was on site that morning and all wells were secure and "are shut-in."

In a Monday evening statement released by New Martinsville Volunteer Fire Department Chief Larry Couch, he stated that the New Martinsville Volunteer Fire Department was alerted to the fire at approximately 9:40 a.m. Saturday morning and responded with two apparatus and their hazardous materials/foam trailer. Ten NMVFD personnel responded to the call from the Clarington VFD's request for assistance. "We, along with the Clarington officials, were advised by **Statoil** personnel at the site that a hydraulic fluid leak in some equipment may have occurred in the far west end of the well pad which may have ignited the blaze," Couch stated.

The remote location of the well pad, when combined with an abundance of equipment and an assortment of chemicals and explosives on the site, made attempts to halt the fire challenging, if not nearly impractical, according to Couch. He stated that the NMVFD cleared that scene shortly after 5 p.m. Saturday.

Couch's release noted that there were no injuries, although some firefighters and well workers were treated for what seemed to be heat related ailments. Also, it was noted that Monroe County and Clarington Volunteer Fire Department officials evacuated homes in the immediate area in the event any of the wells became involved in the fire.

Furthermore, numerous water tank trucks from throughout the region were brought in to shuttle water into the site. Couch's release notes that numerous plans to attack the fire "were thwarted each time by the changing nature of the fire and the materials that were burning, along with numerous minor explosions from the equipment and supplies that were burning."

"From what we could see when we arrived, there were several pieces of heavy equipment already on fire, Couch said, "including several compressor rigs, tractor trailers, fuel trailers, and other similar equipment."

"The nearby water sources simply weren't sufficient to control this fire and the water that was taken into the scene was hauled in by truck from several miles away along the Ohio River."

According to Couch, **Statoil** representatives were estimating the damages at the well site into the tens of millions of dollars.

In an interview by phone with the Wetzel Chronicle, **Bjorn Otto Sverdrup of Statoil** stated that the company's focus is "on the safety of the personnel and to make steps together with local authorities to minimize the impact on the families in the community." Sverdrup noted that Statoil has not spent much time assessing the damages on the site, but noted there were trucks, pumps, and machinery on the site and that "a large part of that was demolished."

Sverdrup stated that **Statoil** is "so very grateful for the local responders and firefighters . . . they did a wonderful job." He added that a temporary evacuation did take place and "we have established a hotline

Print Coverage Report

or a contact line, and we can offer support, and we have personnel available up there now." **Statoil** set up a site, **statoilresponds.com** related to the specific incident; the company encourages users to sign up for updates concerning follow-up work, to submit an inquiry, or read the most up to date information. According to the "**Statoil Responds**" site, local individuals who have been potentially impacted by the Eisenbarth well pad fire can get in contact with **Statoil** at 1-866-893-9512.

According to **Sverdrup**, the fire "probably broke out shortly after 8 a.m." and was not out until "quite late Sunday afternoon."

However, according to **Statoil's Facebook page**, the fire was being managed as of Saturday evening.

Sverdrup stated that one of **Statoil's** goals was to "reduce possible further environmental damages." He added that Statoil was aware that "there are reports that there are fish kills in the nearby creek."

"We take those reports very seriously, and we work together with the local and state environmental authorities," he added.

Bethany McCorkle of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources described the fish kill as "significant" and confirmed it is located at Opossum Creek in Monroe County. She said that the DNR has not determined the cause of the fish kill and details are limited. However, McCorkle stated the Ohio DNR is on scene with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. When asked if the fish kill occurred after the Eisenbarth well pad fire, McCorkle stated, "We had notification of it Sunday, so the timing was after the well fire."

Requests for information from Monroe County Emergency Management Authority Director Phillip Keevert were not responded to. However, Keevert appears to be staying close to the scene of the fire as the following was posted to Monroe County Emergency Management's Facebook page late Monday night: ". . . Day 3 at the well site... Another thanks goes out to Clarington Fire / EMS and Woodsfield Fire for coming out tonight and putting out the rest of the hot spots at the site.."

In a Facebook posting from late Sunday night on Monroe County EMA's Facebook Page, Keevert thanked several volunteer fire departments and businesses who offered assistance and support during the situation. These included the following: Clarington Volunteer Fire Department and EMS, Sardis Volunteer Fire Department, Woodsfield VFD and EMS, Lewisville VFD, Belmont County Tanker Task Force, New Martinsville VFD, Moundsville VFD, Powhatan Point VFD, Paden City Volunteer Fire Company, Monroe County Sheriff's Office, Monroe County Engineers, Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Belmont County Emergency Management Agency, State of Ohio EMA, Belmont County Salvation Army, and Monroe County Commissioners.

Keevert also thanked Wild Well Services from Houston, Texas, as well as Quinet's Court Restaurant for providing meals.

"We still have several days of clean up and assessment for this well pad fire," Keevert noted.

<http://www.wetzelchronicle.com/page/content.detail/id/524278/Fire-Blazed-At-Well-Pad-Saturday.html?nav=5001#sthash.7SocirBL.dpuf>

Print Coverage Report

State says Utica shale fracking has helped nearly double natural gas production in Ohio

July 2, 2014

The Columbus Dispatch

Laura Arenschiold

NORTH CANTON, Ohio — Fracking wells in the Utica shale in eastern Ohio helped to nearly double the state's natural gas production from 2012 to 2013, state officials reported today.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources Director James Zehringer said this morning that compared to 2012, the state's total oil production increased by 62 percent and natural gas production increased by 97 percent.

Zehringer led a discussion at Stark State College in North Canton about the state of oil and gas production tied to drilling in the Utica and Marcellus shale.

He said that in 2012, the shale produced 16 percent of the natural gas in Ohio. Last year, that grew to slightly more than 60 percent. "The Utica play is the real deal," Zehringer said.

Last year, there were 352 hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, wells producing oil and gas, department statistics showed.

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Director Craig Butler, JobsOhio senior managing director David Mustine, State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers and others also spoke at the event.

The overriding message delivered by each agency is that Ohio is experiencing unprecedented growth in drilling in the Utica shale and that the departments are working together to make it easy for companies to drill while ensuring the safety of Ohioans and protecting the environment.

Regulations are important, Zehringer said, "but the regulations have to make sense ... and allow for development."

In the first quarter of 2014, a total of 418 wells produced 1.9 million barrels of oil and 67 billion cubic feet of natural gas.

Mustine said that more than \$6 million in investments and commitments have been made in infrastructure needed to process and move natural gas and oil produced in the Utica shale.

The event comes on the heels of two major spills involving oil and gas wells in eastern Ohio. In April, a well in Morgan County spilled thousands of gallons of oil and chemicals into surrounding fields and streams. And last weekend, a fire at a Monroe County well likely sent contaminants into a nearby creek, killing crayfish, minnows and smallmouth bass as far as 5 miles away from the site.

And in March, geologists said there were 12 earthquakes near a well in northeastern Ohio.

From January 2011 to February 2012, researchers recorded more than 100 earthquakes there that eventually were linked to the pumping of drilling wastewater deep underground into an injection well in the Youngstown area.

The wastewater is a byproduct of fracking, in which drillers pump millions of gallons of water, sand and chemicals thousands of feet below ground to crack rock formations and release oil and gas trapped within them. The waste returns to the surface and then is typically injected for disposal into wells depleted of oil and gas.

Print Coverage Report

Richard Simmers, chief of the division of oil and gas resources, said the number of inspectors has grown as the number of inspections has more than doubled from 2012 to 2013, from 10,000 inspections to more than 23,000.

He said the growth in production “is helping Ohio and this country gain energy independence.”

Butler said more and more regulations are being put in place to ensure the environment and public health are protected.

The Utica rock formation runs beneath the eastern and central parts of the state at depths ranging from 2,000 to 8,000 feet. Drilling has transformed a band of rural Ohio counties east of I-77. Rural roads are jammed with trucks tied to the energy industry, and hotels and campgrounds are booked with traveling workers.

Marcellus shale is another formation. Some of it runs below parts of eastern Ohio.

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2014/07/02/State-to-discuss-Utica-play.html>

Print Coverage Report

Are fracking chemicals from Monroe County fire and spill headed toward the Ohio River?

July 2, 2014

Ohio Citizen Action

Melissa English

CINCINNATI —Saturday's fire at a Monroe County frack well site underscores the need for better oil and gas emergency planning and fracking chemical disclosure. Volunteer firefighters from 6 counties in Ohio and West Virginia doused the fire, which spread to 20 trucks, including 4 containing fracking chemicals, in a battle that lasted for several hours. The result is thousands of gallons of chemical-laced water migrating to nearby Possum Creek, a tributary to the Ohio River.

Early Monday, reports of a several mile long fish kill in Possum Creek were confirmed by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, which is investigating the incident, along with Ohio EPA. Neither agency could provide a list of chemicals being used at the plant, but commonly used fracking chemicals include those regulated by either the Clean Water Act or Safe Drinking Water Act or those which are known to cause cancer.

Ohio's law still allows the oil and gas industry to keep fracking chemicals secret from state and local agencies and first responders and must be changed. Here's what you can do:

Contact Ohio Governor John Kasich and Democratic challenger Ed Fitzgerald, pointing out this example of why we need to repeal Ohio's oil and gas chemical reporting exemption.

Governor John Kasich

Call: (614) 466-3555

Contact Form: <http://www.governor.ohio.gov/Contact/ContacttheGovernor.aspx>

twitter: @JohnKasich | facebook

Candidate Ed Fitzgerald

Call: (216) 443-7178

Contact Form: <http://www.edfitzgeraldforohio.com/contact/>

twitter: @FitzGeraldForOH | facebook

Also, if you live in an Ohio River county, you may want to contact your local Emergency Management Agency to inquire about preparations to protect your drinking water from this and any future chemical spills.

— Melissa English, Development Director, Ohio Citizen Action

<http://ohiocitizen.org/are-fracking-chemicals-from-monroe-county-fire-and-spill-headed-toward-the-ohio-river/>

Print Coverage Report

Thousands of fish dead in Ohio creek after fire

July 2, 2014

Associated Press Newswires

An environmental advocacy organization is looking into a fish kill in an eastern Ohio creek that is also under investigation by the state.

WTOV-TV in Steubenville (<http://bit.ly/1pIUvVH>) reports thousands of fish turned up dead across several miles of Opossum Creek in Monroe County after a weekend fire at a gas well site.

State authorities haven't said whether those situations are connected.

An attorney with the Ohio Environmental Council, an advocacy group, visited the area Tuesday. He characterized the fish kill as one of the state's largest and said it may have been caused by the fire or efforts to extinguish it.

Authorities say a tubing malfunction led to a well pad fire that spread to about 20 trucks and set off explosions Saturday. Some families living nearby were evacuated temporarily.

Print Coverage Report

Ohio Fracking Fire Likely Cause of Large Fish Kill

July 1, 2014

EcoWatch (blog)

Brandon Baker

Ohio Department of Natural Resources and state Environmental Protection Agency officials have launched an investigation to find out what killed a large, but unspecified, amount of fish in a creek that feeds into the Ohio River.

While Ohio officials are willing to concede that a fire at a nearby shale gas fracking site “likely” contaminated Monroe County’s Opossum Creek, according to the Columbus Dispatch, one environmental group appears more certain that those dots have a connection. An ODNR official confirmed the fish kill Sunday—just a day after the fire temporarily displaced about 25 area families.

“The fracking fire appears to have left a miles-long trail of death and destruction in its wake with thousands of dead fish and wildlife floating belly up in this once pristine stream,” Nathan Johnson, staff attorney for the Ohio Environmental Council. “This may be unprecedented, perhaps the biggest Ohio fish kill in memory related to the oil and gas industry.”

The fire occurred on the Eisenbarth well pad, near the West Virginia border, after fracking fluid tubes malfunctioned. The fire spread from the tubes to about 20 trucks that were lined on the pad. It could have killed the crayfish, minnows and smallmouth bass that died as far as 5 miles away from the site.

ODNR spokeswoman Bethany McCorkle told the paper she did not know whether the fracking contaminants had reached the Ohio River, and the EPA said it doesn’t know yet if drinking water in the area has been impacted. Additionally, John Shreve, Monroe County environmental health director, said the contaminants that killed the fish might not be enough to contaminate groundwater.

Shreve said his department is monitoring water quality, administering requested well testing, though no well owners have asked for testing yet.

However, Ohio Environmental Council representatives say the incident is particularly troubling since the creek was once proclaimed by the EPA as one of the state’s cleanest waterways.

“Who is to say that more fracking-related environmental tragedies like the one we appear to be seeing in Opossum Creek won’t occur in the future,” Johnson asked. “We just saw a major well blow-out in Morgan County this past May that threatened a nearby creek.”

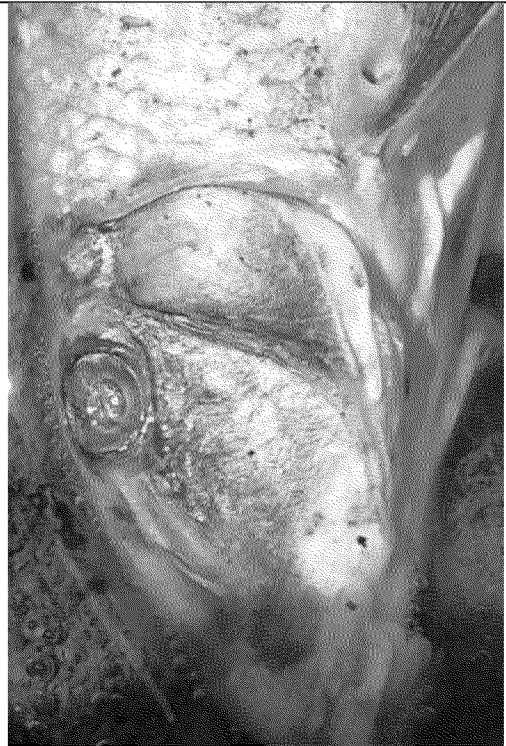
“The Ohio legislature needs to step up and overhaul Ohio’s pitifully toothless existing law to mandate a much larger separation buffer between oil and gas well sites and nearby streams. Extending the legal stream buffer is an urgent no-brainer for Ohio’s environment.”

No injuries were reported in the fire.

Print Coverage Report



Fish were reportedly killed up to five miles away from the fracking site. Photo credit: Nathan Johnson/Ohio Environmental Council



Monroe County, Ohio's Opossum Creek was once deemed one of the cleanest waterways in the state. Photo credit: Nathan Johnson/Ohio Environmental Council



Ohio officials initially said they did not know if a nearby fracking fire caused a fish kill, but that soon changed. Photo credit: Nathan Johnson / Ohio Environmental Council

<http://ecowatch.com/2014/07/01/ohio-fracking-fire-fish-kill/2/>

Print Coverage Report

Fire At Ohio Fracking Well Forced Evacuations And Likely Contributed To Fish Kill

July 1, 2014

ThinkProgress

Katie Valentine

An explosive fire at an Ohio fracking well was likely the cause of a chemical leak into a stream that contributed to the death of fish as far as five miles away from the the fire's site, Ohio officials said Monday.

Over the weekend, a mechanical malfunction sparked a fire on the well pad of a fracking operation in Monroe County, Ohio, a blaze that caused explosions and forced evacuations of people who lived within a mile of the well. The people were evacuated as a precaution "because of the chemicals in the smoke, for breathing reasons," Phillip Keevert, director of the Monroe County Emergency Management Agency, told the Columbus Dispatch.

"The plume of smoke overwhelmed the whole area, so you couldn't really see the fire itself very well," he said. "The pad site is probably, I'm guessing, a 3-acre area."

While crews were fighting the fire on Saturday, they flooded the well area, which likely sent fracking chemicals into a creek nearby the site. That spill in turn likely contributed to a "major fish kill" in the creek that was reported Sunday. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources and Ohio Environmental Protection Agency are investigating the fish kill, which resulted in dead crayfish, minnows and smallmouth bass. The Monroe County Health Department is also monitoring well water to ensure chemicals don't show up in tests. No workers at the well site, owned by Statoil North America, were hurt.

Though officials didn't provide the Columbus Dispatch with a list of chemicals that were present at the site of the fire, many common fracking chemicals have been found to be toxic. Last year, a study that looked at groundwater samples from fracking sites found elevated levels of endocrine-disrupting chemicals, which have been linked to infertility, birth defects, and cancer. Another found that fracking operations in the U.S. produced 280 billion gallons of toxic wastewater in 2012, fluid that often contains carcinogens and can be radioactive.

And fracking chemicals have caused fish kills before. Last year, a federal report found that a fracking fluid spill in 2007 caused the "widespread death or distress of aquatic species" in a small Appalachian creek in Kentucky. The study found that the fish in the creek, including the federally threatened Blackside dace, suffered from gill lesions and damaged livers and spleens, symptoms that are consistent with exposure to heavy metals and acidic water.

"Our study is a precautionary tale of how entire populations could be put at risk even with small-scale fluid spills," USGS scientist Diana Papoulias, the study's lead author, said in a statement. "This is especially the case if the species is threatened or is only found in limited areas, like the Blackside dace is in the Cumberland."

In 2009, another fish kill occurred when up to 8,000 gallons of fracking fluids spilled in Dimock, Pennsylvania, killing some fish and causing others to swim "erratically."

Print Coverage Report

In Ohio, fish kills, water contamination and fires aren't the only things residents have to worry about. Fracking has been linked to earthquakes in the state, prompting state officials to enact new guidelines for monitoring seismic activity near drilling operations in the state. The new rules stipulate that if monitors detect an earthquake of 1.0-magnitude or greater, state regulators will suspend fracking in the area and investigate whether or not drilling played a role in the earthquake.

<http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2014/07/01/3455464/fracking-fire-fish-kill/>

Print Coverage Report

State agency: Fracking fire likely fouled eastern Ohio creek

Jul 1, 2014

The Columbus Dispatch

Laura Arenschield

A fire last weekend at a Monroe County fracking well likely sent contaminants into a nearby creek, killing crayfish, minnows and smallmouth bass as far as 5 miles away from the site, state officials said yesterday.

Officials of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources said crews fighting the fire flooded the area with water on Saturday, likely sending fracking chemicals into the creek, which feeds into the Ohio River.

The agency and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency are investigating the fire and fish kill at the site, about 130 miles east of Columbus.

Bethany McCorkle, spokeswoman for the Department of Natural Resources, said she did not know whether contaminants had reached the Ohio. The EPA said it doesn't know yet whether area drinking water has been tainted.

The Ohio EPA, which deals with pollutants when they reach state waters, said that the Monroe County Health Department would monitor well water.

John Shreve, environmental health director for that health department, said contamination that kills fish in a creek might not necessarily contaminate groundwater.

He said well owners have to ask for those tests. As of yesterday, no one had requested testing.

Saturday's fire on the Eisenbarth well pad, in eastern Ohio across the Ohio River from West Virginia, started when a piece of fracking machinery malfunctioned, McCorkle said.

She said something happened to tubing used to pump fracking fluid to wells. During the fracking process, that fluid is pumped deep underground at high pressure to crack the shale and release natural gas and oil trapped there.

Saturday's fire spread from the tubing to 20 trucks lined up on the well pad, the area that surrounds the wells, McCorkle said. Those trucks ignited, sending thick clouds of black smoke into the air.

No workers were hurt, but one firefighter was treated for smoke inhalation. As many as 25 families who live near the wells were evacuated.

"We were very fortunate that there were no injuries," McCorkle said.

Statoil North America, the company that operates the well pad, has permits for eight wells on the site, state records show. Only one well was being fracked. The others either had been fracked or will be in the future, McCorkle said.

Print Coverage Report

McCorkle said the wells that had been fracked had been capped, which likely kept the fire from being more severe.

Neither state agency could provide a list of chemicals yesterday that were on the site when the fire started, but fracking chemicals include ethylene glycol, which can damage kidneys; formaldehyde, a known cancer risk; and naphthalene, which is considered a possible carcinogen.

The Monroe County well pad caught fire less than two months after a well in Morgan County spilled thousands of gallons of oil and chemicals into surrounding fields and streams.

Statoil North America drills for oil and natural gas throughout the Utica and Marcellus shale regions, and has 17 wells in Ohio, all in Monroe County, according to state records.

The company has established a hot line for residents affected by Saturday's fire. The number is 1-866-893-9512.

larenschield@dispatch.com
[@larenschield](#)

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2014/07/01/state-agency-fracking-fire-likely-fouled-creek.html>

Print Coverage Report

Ohio environmentalists waiting to see if a Monroe County wild fire set in motion a huge fish kill

June 30, 2014

Outdoors with Frischkorn (blog)

Jeff Frischkorn

With the debate regarding hydraulic fracturing (Fracking) far from over in Ohio, opponents of the practice may have been handed a pretty big “I told you so.”

Or maybe not, as state wildlife officials join with their environmental brethren continue to collect evidence and other information related to the fire/fish and wildlife kill that happened over the last weekend in June.

What is known is that in the aftermath of a Monroe County wildfire that encapsulated a well pad where fracking occurs, an enormous fish and wildlife kill was found in nearby Opossum Creek.

It is believed – at least by some environmentalists anyway – that the kill is directly related to the fracking employed at the site, says Nathan Johnson, the Ohio Environmental Council’s staff attorney. Johnson says as well that the incident stretches for about two miles along Opossum Creek.

“This may be unprecedented; perhaps even being the biggest Ohio fish kill related to the oil and gas industry,” Johnson said.

Yet Johnson does say that drawing a line from Point A (the wildfire) to Point B (the fish kill) and then to Point C (a well hole employing fracking fluid) is a bit “speculative.”

Thus the Council is still awaiting word from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources “as to the particulars” of the accident.

Even so, says Johnson who calls this incident an “environmental crisis,” the Ohio EPA” has classified this waterway as one of the cleanest and healthiest streams in the state.”

Johnson does say that a well-related problem threatening a nearby stream is not without precedence, too. In May a Morgan County well blow-out threatened a nearby stream.

And for this reason alone the Ohio legislature needs to become more and better engaged in modifying the state’s laws regarding drilling to make them more ecologically friendly and also help prevent any accidental or deliberate fracking discharges into any waterway, Johnson says.

“Extending the legal stream buffer is an urgent no-brainer for Ohio’s environment,” Johnson says.

This story will be updated as further information becomes available. That update could include the numbers dead fish and wildlife found, the exact nature of the relationship (if any) between the fire and the fish kill.

- Jeffrey L. Frischkorn
JFrischk@Ameritech.net

Print Coverage Report

Jeff is the retired News-Herald reporter who covered the earth sciences, the area's three county park systems and the outdoors for the newspaper. During his 30 years with The News-Herald Jeff was the recipient of more than 100 state, regional and national journalism awards. He also is a columnist and features writer for the Ohio Outdoor News, which is published every other week and details the outdoors happenings in the state.

Posted by Jeff Frischkorn at 6:18 PM

Print Coverage Report

Twenty Trucks Burn & Major Fish Kill at Well Pad in the Ohio Valley

June 30, 2014

FrackCheck WV

Duane Nichols

Fish kill in eastern Ohio (may be) linked to fire at fracking well

From an Article by Jim Woods, Columbus Dispatch, June 30, 2014

The State of Ohio is investigating a fish kill in an eastern Ohio creek near where a fire occurred at a shale-well fracking site on Saturday.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources learned yesterday of the fish kill in Possum Creek in Monroe County, said Jason Fallon, an agency spokesman. Fallon said he did not have details about the extent of the kill. "I can't confirm if it's related to the gas-well fire," he said.

Phillip Keevert, director of the Monroe County Emergency Management Agency, said Division of Wildlife agents were inspecting the creek yesterday and confirmed that a kill occurred.

The Eisenbarth well pad caught fire on Saturday because of a malfunction in hydraulic tubing, authorities said. Fire spread to about 20 trucks lined up on the well pad, triggering explosions that spewed clouds of black smoke.

The trucks that caught fire are used in hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as fracking. Statoil North America operates eight wells on the pad.

At the height of the fire, 20 to 25 families that live within a mile of the site were evacuated. They were allowed to return home on Saturday evening.

A number of area residents reported the fish kill yesterday. Jack Shaner, deputy director of the Ohio Environmental Council, said he has been told that the kill stretched for a few miles. Shaner said he suspects that chemicals used in fracking ran into the creek when firefighters extinguished the blaze.

"It sounds like it was not just smoke and not just fire, but a major fish kill," he said. "Both the company and state agencies owe the public a full public accounting of what went wrong and how they are going to prevent future occurrences."

Statoil North America officials could not be reached for comment. All 17 of the company's Ohio wells are in Monroe County.

<http://www.frackcheckwv.net/2014/06/30/twenty-trucks-burn-major-fish-kill-at-well-pad-in-ohio-valley/>

Print Coverage Report

Weekend Fire At Statoil Well Pad in Ohio Township Prompts Evacuation

June 30, 2014

Natural Gas Intelligence

Personnel and residents were evacuated over the weekend after a well pad operated by Statoil ASA in Monroe County, OH, caught fire, damaging surface equipment at the site and prompting state and local officials to respond, according to the company. No one was hurt.

The fire was reported on Saturday and Statoil said its own inspection team had arrived at the Eisenbarth well pad in Ohio Township, more than 120 miles south of Youngstown, on Sunday. According to a press release from the company, no wells caught fire and each was "secure and shut in." The blaze has since been extinguished.

It wasn't immediately clear early Monday what caused the fire, officials could not be reached to comment. Statoil said the fire was limited to surface equipment. In an update Sunday, the company said it was working with local, state and federal authorities and added that remediation work was continuing. No serious injuries have been reported.

The incident marks the third major well site emergency in the Appalachian Basin in the last five months. In February, two wells operated by Chevron Appalachia LLC caught fire after an explosion that killed one worker in Pennsylvania (see Shale Daily, Feb. 11). In April, a subcontractor was killed by heavy equipment at Rice Energy Inc.'s Bigfoot 9H well in Belmont County, OH (see Shale Daily, April 7).

<http://www.naturalgasintel.com/articles/98864-weekend-fire-at-statoil-well-pad-in-ohio-township-prompts-evacuation>

Print Coverage Report

Fish kill reported near Ohio gas well fire site

June 30, 2014

Associated Press Newswires

A fish kill has been reported in a Monroe County creek near the site of a weekend fire at an eastern Ohio gas well.

The state is investigating the fish kill.

Ohio Environmental Council deputy director Jack Shaner tells The Columbus Dispatch (<http://bit.ly/1nWs7ZO>) he was told the kill spanned a few miles.

An Ohio Department of Natural Resources spokesman told the newspaper Sunday that he didn't have details about the fish kill or whether it was related to the fire.

Authorities say a tubing malfunction led to a well pad fire that spread to about 20 trucks on the pad and set off explosions Saturday. Some families living nearby had to be evacuated temporarily.

The newspaper said the operator of eight wells on the pad couldn't be reached for comment.

Print Coverage Report

Fish kill in eastern Ohio might be linked to fire at fracking well

June 30, 2014

The Columbus Dispatch

Jim Woods

The state is investigating a fish kill in an eastern Ohio creek near where a fire occurred at a shale-well fracking site on Saturday.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources learned yesterday of the fish kill in Possum Creek in Monroe County, said Jason Fallon, an agency spokesman. Fallon said he did not have details about the extent of the kill. "I can't confirm if it's related to the gas-well fire," he said.

Phillip Keevert, director of the Monroe County Emergency Management Agency, said Division of Wildlife agents were inspecting the creek yesterday and confirmed that a kill occurred.

The Eisenbarth well pad caught fire on Saturday because of a malfunction in hydraulic tubing, authorities said. Fire spread to about 20 trucks lined up on the well pad, triggering explosions that spewed clouds of black smoke.

The trucks that caught fire are used in hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as fracking. Statoil North America operates eight wells on the pad.

At the height of the fire, 20 to 25 families that live within a mile of the site were evacuated. They were allowed to return home on Saturday evening.

A number of area residents reported the fish kill yesterday. Jack Shaner, deputy director of the Ohio Environmental Council, said he has been told that the kill stretched for a few miles.

Shaner said he suspects that chemicals used in fracking ran into the creek when firefighters extinguished the blaze.

"It sounds like it was not just smoke and not just fire, but a major fish kill," he said. "Both the company and state agencies owe the public a full public accounting of what went wrong and how they are going to prevent future occurrences."

Statoil North America officials could not be reached for comment.

All 17 of the company's Ohio wells are in Monroe County, state records show.

jwoods@dispatch.com
@Woodsnight

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2014/06/30/fish-kill-in-eastern-ohio-might-be-linked-to-fire-at-fracking-well.html>

Print Coverage Report

Statoil reports blaze at Ohio shale well
No injuries reported in equipment fire at Ohio well.

June 30, 2014

UPI

Daniel J. Graeber

No injuries were reported when above-ground equipment at a shale reserve area caught fire in Monroe County, Ohio, Norwegian energy company Statoil said.

Statoil provided updates Sunday about the fire at the Eisnebarth well in Monroe County in southeastern Ohio. The blaze was limited to surface equipment and did not spread below ground to the well itself.

All personnel working at the site were evacuated safely. Some nearby residents were moved to another location as a security precaution, the company said.

"There have been no reports of serious injuries to date associated with this incident," Statoil said in a statement. "Statoil continues to work closely with local, state and federal authorities to manage this incident."

The company said the fire was extinguished. A Statoil well inspection team was on site to examine the cause of the blaze.

All wells are secured.

There was no public comment from county or state officials on the incident.

http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Energy-Resources/2014/06/30/Statoil-reports-blaze-at-Ohio-shale-well/2951404132442/#ixzz368DzwYkK

Print Coverage Report

UPDATE: Monroe Co. Residents Share Evacuation Accounts

June 30, 2014

WTAP NBC The News Center

Residents of Long Ridge road in Monroe county have returned home after Saturday's explosion.

While there were no reported injuries, many of the families say it was a traumatic experience.

"First I thought it was a storm, then I came out and saw the black smoke, and it sounded like a forth of July event a little early," said David Dye.

Dye and his family have lived in the area for decades.

He says things have changed since the oil company moved in.

"If I'd have known what I know now, I wish they would've never came around. They more or less seem to think they can run all over anybody and nobody has to say a word, but if that would've ignited those wells on the hill, they say it would've taken out New Martinsville.

Other families say the're just grateful.

"We're just thankful no one was hurt. A house can be rebuilt. But somebody's life can't," said Angie VanCamp, another long-time resident.

The wind blew the fire in the opposite direction, so the no one was hurt and the town is recovering.

Investigators have not yet commented on what's next for the company, or the people who live nearby.

Around 10:30 Saturday morning, the Monroe Co. Sheriff's Office said that a well pad site was on fire.

The sheriff's office and state troopers evacuated 20-plus homes along Long Ridge Rd. near Hannibal.

Workers were also evacuated. They say the fire started when a vehicle went up in flames. It quickly spread from there.

Crews worked for hours to contain the fire. The smoke could be seen for miles

The wind blew the fire in the opposite direction of the oil well itself.

At last report around 6 p.m. Saturday, crews were still battling the fire. Investigators haven't released any information since then.

<http://www.thenewscenter.tv/home/headlines/Monroe-Co-Well-Site-Fire-265076421.html>

Print Coverage Report

Statoil reports fire at Ohio well pad now extinguished

June 30, 2014

Oil & Gas Journal

By OGJ editors

A fire reported by Statoil ASA on June 28 at the company's Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio, has been extinguished.

The fire involved surface equipment only and the wells themselves were never on fire, the company said. All personnel were evacuated and remain safe. No major injuries have been reported. As a precautionary measure, the surrounding residences were temporarily evacuated.

A Statoil well-inspection team is onsite and has secured and shut in all the wells. An investigation into the causes of the fire continues with local, state, and federal authorities.

Statoil entered the Marcellus in 2008 through a partnership with Chesapeake Energy Corp. In 2012 the company acquired 70,000 operated net acres in the central Marcellus in Ohio and West Virginia for \$590 million from three US private companies: Grenadier Energy Partners LLC, PetroEdge Energy LLC, and Protege Energy LLC (OGJ Online, Dec. 19, 2012).

http://www.ogj.com/articles/2014/06/statoil-reports-fire-at-ohio-well-pad-now-extinguished.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+latest-news-ogj+%28OGJ+-+Latest+News%29

Print Coverage Report

Fire currently being managed at Statoil onshore well pad - Monroe County, Ohio

June 30, 2014

Scandinavian Oil & Gas

A fire is being managed at Statoil's Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio. The incident was reported at 9 am (EST) to the company's alarm center. Emergency responders were immediately notified about the situation.

Statoil's incident command team has been mobilised and is responding.

The fire involved equipment on the location. It is limited to surface equipment. None of the wells have been or are on fire. All personnel on the location are safe and accounted for.

Statoil's emergency response management is handling all situations based on a worst-case scenario and adjusting the measures to the actual development of the situation. As an additional safety precaution residents close to the well pad have been asked to temporarily evacuate. We are coordinating closely with local first responders.

Investigations as to the cause of the incident are underway but our first priority is to take care of the people involved in the situation, then the environment and our surroundings, and finally to protect the technical integrity of the well and associated equipment.

<http://www.scandoil.com/moxie-bm2/news/fire-currently-being-managed-at-statoil-onshore-we.shtml>

Print Coverage Report

UPDATE 1-Ohio well pad fire to have minimal impact on output-Statoil

June 29, 2014

Reuters

Balazs Koranyi and Nerijus Adomaitis

(Reuters) - Norwegian energy firm Statoil has put out most of the fire at the well pad in Monroe County, Ohio, and impact on its shale gas production from the Marcellus area will be minimal, its spokesman said on Sunday.

Statoil, which entered the Marcellus area in 2008 through a partnership with Chesapeake Energy, has been supplying gas to New York since November last year.

The company said on Saturday evening that the fire had broken out at Eisenbarth well pad, involving surface equipment, and there were no injuries reported.

"Most of the fire has been put out. Some scattered fires remain," Statoil's spokesman Morten Eek said.

"Due to the fire, a handful of wells were shut down, but it will have a minor impact on the total production," he added.

The company has started investigation into the causes of the fire.

As of end Dec. 2013, Statoil held 611,000 acres (247,263 hectares) in the Marcellus area, with its own production averaging 85.6 million barrels of oil equivalent per day. (Reporting by Balazs Koranyi and Nerijus Adomaitis; Editing by Stephen Powell)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/29/statoil-fire-ohio-idUSL6N0PA0G420140629>

Print Coverage Report

Glitch sparks smoky fire at gas well

June 29, 2014

The Columbus Dispatch

Jennifer Smith Richards

A Monroe County shale-well site still was smoldering last night, and some residents were sheltered at a nearby high school, after an explosive fire yesterday morning.

Officials said yesterday that the fire at the Eisenbarth well pad was caused by a mechanical malfunction in hydraulic tubing and that it was limited to the equipment on the surface of the well pad, which is the area that surrounds the natural-gas wells.

Flames spread from the tubing to 20 trucks that were lined up on the well pad, causing explosions and thick, black smoke that stayed for hours.

None of the 45 workers on site was hurt, state and oil-company officials said yesterday. One firefighter was treated for smoke inhalation.

"All of the people are accounted for, and we're not aware of any injuries reported. There probably are people being subject to examination, but it seems to be OK," said Bjorn Otto Sverdrup, spokesman for Statoil North America, which operates the wells.

The trucks that caught fire are used in hydraulic fracturing, commonly called fracking. There are eight wells on the pad, including five that have been fracked and two that are being actively worked on, said Bethany McCorkle, spokeswoman for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. One had been fracked and has since been closed.

The well site is in a rural part of the eastern Ohio county along the Ohio River across from West Virginia.

The 20 to 25 families who live within a mile of the well site were forced to evacuate earlier in the day, and the surrounding roads were blocked off, said the county emergency director. By evening, families were allowed to return home or go to River High School, where the American Red Cross had set up a temporary shelter.

Five families chose not to return home.

"They were moved out as a precaution because of the chemicals in the smoke, for breathing reasons," said Phillip Keevert, director of the Monroe County Emergency Management Agency. "The plume of smoke overwhelmed the whole area, so you couldn't really see the fire itself very well. The pad site is probably, I'm guessing, a 3-acre area."

Keevert said the fire was the largest well-related incident that Monroe County has handled. He said emergency responders knew a little about the well site, including what chemicals were stored there, but had never been on it.

Richard Haslam Sr., said his home in Clarington is about 1 1/2 miles from the wells. He watched the two black columns of smoke and was interested, so he drove a little closer. Haslam said that he didn't worry that the well fire was dangerous, and that people went on about their business, mowing their lawns and watching the firefighters work.

"It's one of those things that happens," he said.

Haslam also said that people in the area aren't particularly opposed to fracking.

Print Coverage Report

“My God, they’re 20,000 feet down in the ground. Fracking isn’t going to hurt anything around here,” he said. “The real danger is this kind of thing — fire or accidents like that.”

Part of the well site still was considered a “hot spot,” and well-emergency specialists who were flown in yesterday were working to avoid another flare-up.

Monroe County has eight volunteer fire departments, and they all responded, Keevert said. So, too, did the Ohio Department of Transportation to block off roads, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to monitor any effect on waterways, and Natural Resources, which regulates the oil and gas industry.

Sixteen pump trucks and four “blender trucks” caught fire at the Eisenbarth site, McCorkle said. Pump trucks are used to create high pressure to frack shale. Blender trucks are used to prepare fluids that are used in fracking.

When companies frack into shale, they pump a mixture of sand, water and chemicals deep into the earth to break up the shale and free trapped oil and natural gas. Statoil North America’s Sverdrup said the “ordinary materials used in fracking — that would mostly be water, sand, small portions of chemicals and some fuels” — were on the well pad.

Statoil North America, part of Statoil, a global Norwegian company, operates rigs throughout the Marcellus-shale region in Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York. In Ohio, the company has 17 wells, all in Monroe County, according to state records.

The company has established a hot line for residents to reach it or get support. The number is 1-866-893-9512.

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2014/06/29/glitchsparks-smoky-fire-at-gas-well.html>

Print Coverage Report

Emergency At Statoil's Eisenbarth Well Pad

June 29, 2014

MarineLink.com

Joseph R. Fonseca

A fire is being managed at Statoil's Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio. The incident was reported at 9 am (EST) to the company's alarm center. Emergency responders were immediately notified about the situation.

Statoil's incident command team has been mobilised and is responding.

The fire involved equipment on the location. It is limited to surface equipment. None of the wells have been or are on fire. All personnel on the location are safe and accounted for. Statoil's emergency response management is handling all situations based on a worst-case scenario and adjusting the measures to the actual development of the situation. As an additional safety precaution residents close to the well pad have been asked to temporarily evacuate. We are coordinating closely with local first responders.

Investigations as to the cause of the incident are underway but our first priority is to take care of the people involved in the situation, then the environment and our surroundings, and finally to protect the technical integrity of the well and associated equipment.

Further updates will be provided as information becomes available.

Locals who have been potentially impacted may get in contact on +1 (866) 893-9512.

<http://www.marinelink.com/news/eisenbarth-emergency372032.aspx>

Print Coverage Report

Massive fire at a well-site in Monroe Co. OH

June 28, 2014

Bill Huston's Blog (Binghamton NY)

MAY BE TIME TO ORDER PIZZA?

Massive fire at a well-site in Monroe Co. OH: "The main concern is about the firing spreading, but also explosions as the gas well heads get hot and when they heat up they tend to explode, and that could cause debris to fly through the air for up to a mile radius."

St. Clairsville, Ohio State Patrol Lieutenant James Fonda, speaking about today's gas well fire that has evacuated 20-25 homes and involves six fire companies from Ohio and West Virginia.

<http://www.wtrf.com/story/25894483/authorities-confirm-well-site-fire-in-monroe-county>

<http://williamahuston.blogspot.com/2014/06/massive-fire-at-well-site-in-monroe-co.html>

Print Coverage Report

Gas well fire in eastern Ohio forces evacuations

June 28, 2014

Associated Press

HANNIBAL, Ohio (AP) - A fire at natural gas well site in southeastern Ohio near the West Virginia state line is forcing a few evacuations.

The operator of the site says the fire in Monroe County is on the surface and not burning in any of its wells.

Statoil USA Onshore Properties says those living near the site have been evacuated and that no one has been injured.

The State Highway Patrol says about five people volunteered to leave their homes.

The Columbus Dispatch reports that the site has eight wells with just one that is producing.

Print Coverage Report

Norway's Statoil says battling fire at Ohio shale well pad

June 28, 2014

Reuters

Balazs Koranyi

(Reuters) - Norwegian energy firm Statoil is battling a fire at the Eisenbarth well pad in Monroe County, Ohio, part of its shale gas operations in the Marcellus area, it said in a statement on Saturday.

"There is a fire involving equipment on location," the firm said. "It is limited to surface equipment and does not involve the wells."

The firm said all personnel were accounted for and there were no injuries reported. (Reporting by Balazs Koranyi)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/28/statoil-fire-ohio-idUSWEB00OYU20140628>

Print Coverage Report

Fire at natural-gas well site in Monroe County forces evacuations

June 28, 2014

The Columbus Dispatch

Holly Zachariah

A natural gas well site operated by Statoil in Monroe County has been on fire since at least 9 a.m. today, and at least some nearby residents have been evacuated.

Statoil USA Onshore Properties, Inc. said in a news release that the fire at the Eisenbarth well pad in Ohio Township in that county — in eastern Ohio along the West Virginia border — is limited to the surface and is not burning in any actual wells. The wells on the site either have been, or are expected to be, hydraulically fractured, or fracked.

The company said in the news release that no one was injured, but residents close to the well site have been evacuated. It isn't clear how many were told to leave their homes or how far the evacuation zone extends. The Monroe County sheriff's office would not comment.

Personnel from several agencies are assisting.

No one from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency or the Ohio Department of Natural Resources was immediately available for comment. The Ohio EPA deals with potential hazards to the state's water supply and responds in cases of spills or explosions that endanger the environment. The natural resources agency is responsible for oversight of the state's oil and gas industry.

The site has eight wells; one is producing, one has been drilled and the rest are either permitted or are being drilled, according to state records.

"We are coordinating closely with local first responders," the company said in its statement.

The fire site appears to be about 125 miles east of Columbus.

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2014/06/28/natural-gas-well-fire.html>

Print Coverage Report

Authorities Confirm Well Site Fire in Monroe County

June 28, 2014

WTRF

The Monroe County Sheriff's Department has confirmed that a well site is currently on fire.

Police are not releasing any other details at this time.

Stay with 7 News as we work to get updates.

<http://www.wtrf.com/story/25894483/authorities-confirm-well-site-fire-in-monroe-county>